



Committee:	Governance & People
Date:	4th October 2023
Agenda item:	6
Report title:	Annual Complaints Report (Housing)
Report author:	Catherine Hook – Director of Housing & Community
Summary:	<p>This report provides trustees with the annual complaints report for Housing services which forms an essential part of our compliance with the Housing Ombudsman Service (HOS) and that of the Housing Regulatory Standards.</p> <p><i>Due to annual leave, further narrative on the complaint's numbers will be presented at the meeting.</i></p>
Recommendation:	For trustees to approve the annual complaints report.

Governance and legal issues:	As a regulated housing provider, we are required to publish complaints data within our annual accounts and in the public domain. The Housing Ombudsman Complaints Handling Code places requirements on us to self-assess against a set of mandatory requirements, including our adherence to requirements we 'must' comply with as a member.
Financial summary:	There are no financial considerations resulting from this report.
Property issues:	There are no property issues relating to this report.
People:	Beneficiary satisfaction is of utmost importance to delivering a fair and inclusive service. The Housing Ombudsman Complaints Handling Code is clear on its expectations on what all tenants should expect from their landlord, including social housing services such as ours.
Procurement implications:	There are no procurement implications arising from this report.
Risk management:	Non-compliance with the Housing Ombudsman Complaints Handling Code places a high risk to One YMCAs registration with the regulator. Therefore, a review of our policy and compliance against the complaints code self-assessment is underway which will be reported to the committee at their next meeting.
Contributors:	None
Background papers available on request:	Housing Ombudsman Complaints Handling Code One YMCA Complaints Policy

Housing

Ombudsman Service

Complaint Handling Code summary

- The Code is now explicit about what is mandatory, indicated by use of the word 'must'. Where the Ombudsman considers it is appropriate for landlords to use their discretion to achieve best practice in complaint handling the word 'should' is used.
- Where landlords do deviate from the Code, they must explain why in the self-assessment, which must be reviewed annually and published on the landlord's website (where a landlord has a website).
- Service request chasers, such as following up a missed appointment, may be able to be resolved 'there and then' and their handling does not form part of the complaints system.
- A complaint is defined as:
'an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the organisation, its own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting an individual resident or group of residents.'
- Landlords can only exclude complaints where there is a valid reason to do so, and these reasons must be clearly set out in the complaint policy. Where a landlord decides not to accept a complaint, they must write to the resident to explain why and advise of the right to ask the Ombudsman to review this decision.
- Landlords must provide more than one avenue for residents to raise a complaint.
- The complaint policy must be available in a clear and accessible format for all residents and must be accessible on the website along with information about how to make a complaint.
- The complaints policy and process, the Complaint Handling Code and the Housing Ombudsman Scheme must be publicised to residents in multiple formats and as part of relevant correspondence. Landlords must also provide the Ombudsman's contact details in its relevant correspondence with residents.
- There must be a person or team responsible for complaint handling and an appointed complaint handler must have appropriate skills and no conflict of interest with the complaint they are investigating.
- Complaints must be acknowledged and logged at stage one within five working days of receipt.
- The investigation must be impartial and balanced to ensure fair and appropriate findings and recommendations and the response must be issued within 10 working days of the complaint being logged.
- Landlords must accept a request by the resident (or their representative) to escalate the complaint to the next stage unless an exclusion applies.
- Stage two responses must be issued within 20 working days of the complaint being escalated.
- Two stage landlord complaint procedures are ideal. If landlords strongly believe a third stage is necessary, they must set out their reasons for this as part of their self-assessment. A process with more than three stages is not acceptable under any circumstances.
- Any remedies offered following investigation must reflect the extent of any service failures and the level of detriment caused to the resident as a result.
- Landlords must report on wider learning and improvements from complaints in their annual report and more frequently to their residents, staff and scrutiny panels.]

One YMCA Annual Complaints Summary

FY 2022-23

Number of complaints by category

Category	Total
Any other aspect of housing management	12
Attitude or conduct of a staff member	9
Standard of service provided	9
YMCA has not followed agreed policy	2
Grand Total	32

Outcome of complaints

Outcome type	Stage 1 Outcome	Stage 2 Outcome	Stage 3 Outcome	Total
Not upheld	5	4		9
Partially Upheld	5	2	1	8
Upheld	11	2		13
Grand Total				30

Complaints actioned within policy timeframes	
Actioned within timeframe	21
Not actioned within timeframe	7
No data	4

Complaints resolved by stage	
Stage 1	22
Stage 2	8
Stage 3	1